

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. By 1949, all the peasants in the Lvov Oblast, the Droboych Rayon, and in the Galician part of the Soviet Union had been forced to join the kolkhozy, where rigid discipline was maintained. For refusal to do a certain type of work or for being absent from work for more than a day, a kolkhoznik would receive a five-year jail sentence and his belongings would be confiscated and turned over to the kolkhoz. Those sentenced to five years were usually sent to perform forced labor in coal mines of the Donbass, but those with longer terms were sent to Siberia. Many persons who were tried in 1945, 1946, and 1947 had already served their sentences and had again been arrested and imprisoned for longer periods under Criminal Code 56, which deals with those who disseminate anti-Soviet propaganda. A person could be tried under this law for simply describing conditions in the prison camp or jail in which he had been interned. Secret agents among the local population were numerous, and every word spoken was carried to the MVD and MGB.
2. According to local inhabitants, by 1949 three-fourths of the population south of Lvov had been arrested and deported. Many of these people were peasants who had resisted collectivization and had refused to surrender their produce to the government. Forced deliveries of grain, meat, and other products were so large and so frequent that little was left for the kolkhozy. This forced the kolkhozniki, many of them with entire families, to starve or migrate west in search of food. They travelled at their own risk without tickets or documentation of any kind. These people, thousands of whom were encountered in Kharkov and Kley, were called meshechniki (bag-carriers). They carried only meager belongings, which they hoped to exchange for food, and they usually travelled by freight trains, ignoring the militia, who could do nothing with them. At each station, militia tried to chase as many meshechniki off the train as possible. However, only those offering the least resistance were taken off and the militia seemed satisfied to unload one or two persons, leaving the rest to continue their journey. As many as 50 bag-carriers would ride a

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single flatcar loaded with steel, and whole trains would be loaded down with these migrants. According to local inhabitants, this mass migration had been going on since 1946.

3. Villagers in the Lvov Rayon [now Bryukhovichki Rayon] were very anti-Soviet and were willing to give aid to escapees from forced labor camps. In doing so, they usually questioned the escapee about conditions in the camps and about friends or relatives of theirs who had been sent to forced labor camps. One woman who lived near Lvov told of her twenty-six-year-old son who was given a 15-year sentence because he was suspected of belonging to the Banderovtsi. She related that so many people had been arrested and given long jail sentences in Lvov Oblast, Droghobych Rayon, and Galicia, that hardly an adult male was left and there wasn't a single family which did not have some member arrested and imprisoned. According to local inhabitants, by 1949, some of the villages of the Volovo Okrug, Zakarpatskaya Oblast, notably Sinevirskaya Polyana (Sinevir Polana, N 48-35, E 23-40) and Kolochavy (Kolocava, N 48-23, E 23-38), had been completely liquidated and the people had been sent to Siberia for resisting collectivization and for connection with the Banderovtsi. In the village of Negrovets (Negrovec, N 48-26, E 23-38), half of the residents were arrested on suspicion of connection with the Banderovtsi, while the other half were evacuated under the pretense that the area had to be cleared for the building of a hydroelectric station.
4. Except for an insignificant number of Communists and collaborators, the entire population was strongly opposed to the Soviet regime and every grown man and woman of the population was actively engaged in the Banderovtsi. Many of them hid in the woods, while others kept their connections with the Banderovtsi a secret and lived openly. In the Lvov Rayon, Banderovtsi occasionally carried out armed raids against prisons to free their friends and, at times, engaged in regular warfare with units of the Soviet Army in the woods surrounding Lvov. Many of the Banderovtsi members who lived at home with their families, had their own arms and during the night preyed upon Soviet installations and stores. Hate of the population for Stalin and the regime was generally so great that the robbing of Soviet shops and the killing of Soviet agents and town activists was not uncommon.
5. Persons travelling on secondary routes in this area would quite frequently encounter Banderovtsi. In one instance, two escapees from a forced labor camp were stopped by Banderovtsi, taken to their headquarters, and interrogated. The Banderovtsi were primarily interested in the system of controls which were in force along the route the escapees had taken and the type of guard installations on bridges. They were also interested in anti- and pro-communist personalities, the location and strength of the militia, and how the militia carried out their duties. After the interrogation, the escapees were asked if they wanted to join the Banderovtsi and, upon refusing, were fed and released.
6. Of 2,000 prisoners in the Uzhgorod (N 48-38, E 22-16) jail in 1948, 50 to 75 percent were former army personnel or members of the militia. Many of them were caught trying to cross the border illegally in the vicinity of Uzhgorod, where the area is so well guarded that crossing is practically impossible. Other prisoners included plain army deserters and many thieves who had committed armed robbery. It was evident that banditry and robbery was a pastime of former service men in the Carpatho-Ukraine. What proportion of these arrested former service men had attempted to cross the border was not known. The majority of the Soviet Army deserters were either Ukrainians or Belorussians.
7. The prison camp at Lvov held about 5,000 inmates and was comprised of 200 to 300 barracks (sic). The entire camp area was surrounded by a high barbed wire fence about three to four meters high with guard towers spaced every 50 meters along the fence. Daily rations per worker consisted of the following: 500 grams of black bread per day, soup for dinner and breakfast, and stew for supper. The so-called Stakhanovites, who fulfilled their daily norms over 160 percent, received quality bread and got second helpings at dinner

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and supper. The prisoners worked nine hours per day on the construction of a hydroelectric station. There were some prisoners in the camp who were confined to barracks and kept under constant guard. This group did not go out on work parties and their barracks were separated from the main body of buildings.

8. At forced labor camps in the Voroshilovgrad Oblast, where prisoners with short terms were sent to work the coal mines, prisoners were considered "free citizens"; that is, they worked without police supervision but were forbidden to escape and received no pay. Any attempt to escape was considered a criminal act and was punishable by 15 years' imprisonment. Prisoners were given documents which permitted them to live and move freely within a specified area.
9. Among the coal mines in this area worked by the prisoners was the Mine i/n Stalin in Sverdlovsk (N 48-05, E 39-41), Voroshilovgrad Oblast. Workers of this mine were assigned to unfurnished barracks, seven or eight men to a room. Food consisted of 400 grams of bread per day, cabbage stump and watery bean soup for dinner, stew for breakfast and supper, 25 grams of sugar per day, and second helpings on Saturday and Sunday. Stakhanovites who fulfilled their daily norms 200 percent received 600 grams of bread per day and were given either a ladle of gruel or potatoes for dinner. Each worker received two rubles per month with which to buy additional bread or tobacco. Hired workmen brought in from other oblasts lived no better than the prisoners. Their barracks were also unfurnished, their food ration was the same as the prisoners, and they were paid only 60 rubles per month.
10. At Sverdlovsk, the barracks were not guarded nor was there a daily roll call taken. Although prisoners were obligated to inform the authorities immediately of any prisoners' intention to escape, this rarely happened. Usually, a prisoner's absence was not reported for two or three days, and it was then too late for the authorities to pick him up easily. Altogether, quite a few prisoners and voluntary laborers, usually persons from Carpatho-Ukraine, Galicia, or the Greater Ukraine, escaped in groups of twos and fives. Punishment for such acts was very severe. Failure to show up for just one work shift meant court action within 24 hours and five years' imprisonment. An escape attempt drew an automatic term of 15 to 20 years' imprisonment in Siberia. Other obstacles to escape were the lack of documents, money, and clothes other than those identifying the wearer with the coal mines, i.e., soldier's padded sweaters and trousers, and miner's boots.
11. There were 1500 men working in the Mine i/n Stalin in Sverdlovsk, most of whom were forced laborers. Other groups included the voluntary workers, and German prisoners. The German prisoners were kept in a separate camp and were closely guarded, both in camp and while commuting to and from the mine. Working conditions in the mine were very poor.

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